

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 10880 241417Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11
OES-09 SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 IO-13
DLOS-09 SSM-03 SAA-01 SES-02 OC-06 CCO-00 DOEE-00
SSO-00 /162 W

-----095603 241454Z /42

P 241411Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5081
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

C O N F I E N T I A L TEL AVIV 10880

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, ENRG, EG, US, IS
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO GOI ON MINERALS EXPLOITATION IN
OCCUPIED TERRITORY

REF: TEL AVIV 7180

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED AIDE MEMOIRE DATED AUGUST 20
FROM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS REPLYING TO DEMARCHE
REPORTED REFTEL. TEXT OF AIDE MEMOIRE FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT. IN RESPONSE TO THE EMBASSY'S AIDE MEMOIRE
OF 6 JUNE 1978, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WISHES
TO REAFFIRM ONCE AGAIN THAT ISRAEL'S ACTIVITIES UP TO THE
MEDIAN LINE IN THE GULF OF SUEZ ARE IN FULL COMPLIANCE
WITH THE RELEVANT RULES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

THE U.S. AIDE MEMOIRE REFERS TO "HARASSMENT OF EGYPTIAN
SPONSORED EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES." IT IS SURELY NOT THE
U.S. POSITION THAT "EGYPTIAN SPONSORED EXPLORATIONS" HAVE
THE RIGHT TO EXPLORE TERRITORIES UNDER ISRAEL OCCUPATION
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 10880 241417Z

AND THAT ISRAEL'S OBJECTION IS TO BE CONSIDERED "HARASS-
MENT."

THE U.S. AIDE MEMOIRE FURTHER REQUESTS AN EXPLANATION OF
WHY OIL EXPLORATIONS ARE HELPFUL TO THE PEACE PROCESS.
ISRAEL'S POLICY, AS HAS BEEN STATED, IS TO RESPECT VALID
LEASES GRANTED TO FOREIGN COMPANIES BY THE EGYPTIAN GOVERN-

MENT PRIOR TO JUNE 1967. IN ALL SUCH CONCESSIONS, ISRAEL IS ENTITLED TO ALL THE RIGHTS PREVIOUSLY HELD BY THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT.

AS REGARDS AREAS WHERE THERE WERE NO SUCH LEASES, ISRAEL IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS FUNCTION AS A MILITARY OCCUPIER, GRANTS RIGHTS TO EXPLORE AND UTILISE OIL RESOURCES.

THE ALTERNATIVES TO SUCH A POLICY ARE EITHER -

- TO ALLOW THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH NOT IN
 - OCCUPATION OF THE TERRITORY, TO CONTINUE TO GRANT
 - LICENCES AND RECEIVE INCOME. THERE IS TO OUR KNOW-
 - LEDGE NO SUCH INTERNATIONAL PRECEDENT AND WE DOUBT
 - THAT THE U.S. POSITION IS THAT OCCUPYING STATES ARE
 - BOUND TO SO BEHAVE;
-
- THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO STOP ALL EXPLORA-
 - TION AND UTILIZATIONS. SUCH A POLICY WOULD PLACE
 - AN UNWARRANTED ECONOMIC BURDEN ON ISRAEL WHICH HAS
 - TO PAY FOR THE COSTS OF THE OCCUPATION; FURTHERMORE,
 - IT WOULD PREVENT THE INCREASE IN THE VALUE OF THE
 - AREA WHICH HAS BEEN CAUSED BY THE EXPLORATIONS AND
 - WOULD LEAD TO A DETERIORATION IN THE ECONOMIC WEALTH
 - OF THE AREA. IT WOULD MOREOVER DEPRIVE THE WESTERN
 - WORLD OF A GROWINGLY IMPORTANT SOURCE OF OIL.

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 10880 241417Z

IN THE ONGOING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT, ISRAEL HAS MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE EXISTENCE OF THE OIL FIELDS IN SINAI WOULD NOT BE RAISED AS AN OBSTACLE TO THE RESTORATION OF SINAI TO EGYPTIAN SOVEREIGNTY WITH THE REACHING OF A PEACE AGREEMENT.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THE ORDERLY AND REASONABLE DEVELOPMENT OF OIL RESOURCES IN SINAI, IS IN OUR OPINION, INDEED TO THE BENEFIT OF THE AREA AS A WHOLE. END TEXT.

2. THE ORIGINAL OF THE AIDE MEMOIRE WILL BE POUCHED TO NEA/IAI ON AUGUST 25 UNDER REGISTRY NUMBER 517869. LEWIS

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